

Message Text

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71

ACTION NEA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5233

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

MAMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 6142

AMCONSUL PESHAWAR UNN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S RULE EXTENDED IN BALUCHISTAN

1. DURING FIVE HOUR JOINT SITTING OF PAKISTAN
PARLIAMENT EVENING OF AP AKJEOLPPCF BJSZS'S# RULE IN
BALUCHISTAN WAS EXTENDED ADDITIONAL TWO MONTHS,
THROUGH END OF JUNE. THIS IS FINAL EXTENSION ALLOWABLE
UNDER CONSTITUTION WHICH PLACES SIX MONTH LIMIT ON
PRESIDENT'S RULE IN ANY PROVINCE. OPPOSITION ATTENDED
JOINT SITTING WHICH WAS STORMY SESSION COMPLETELY
DEVOTED TO POLITICAL SITUATION IN BALUCHISTAN. SITTING
ENDED WITH LONG ADDRESS BY PRIME MINISTER IN WHICH HE
ANSWERED OPPOSITION CHARGES AND, ACCORDING TO THOSE
ATTENDING THE SESSION, DISPLAYED HIS USUAL COMBINATION
OF AGGRESSIVE DEBATING TECHNIQUES AND SHARPLY DRAWN
CRITICISM. SESSION WAS FURTHER PROOF THAT AS ELECTION
DRAWS CLOSER, DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND
OPPOSITION ARE BECOMING FURTHER EXACERBATED AND BHUTTO'S
GLOVES-OFF TREATMENT OF OPPOSITION FORCES IS INTENSIFYING.

(FOOTNOTE: FURTHER EVIDENCE OF LATTER IS ARREST APRIL 25
OF TEHRIK-I-ISTIQLAL LEADER GOHAR AYUB, SON OF LATE PAK

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PRESIDENT, FOR OBJECTIONABLE SPEECH IN VIOLATION OF DEFENSE

OF PAKISTAN RULES.)

2. THE LAW MINISTER, MALIK AKHTAR, OPENED DEBATE WITH AN INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT. AFTER NOTING THE PROGRESS IN BALUCHISTAN SINCE THE NAP-JUI PROVINCIAL MINISTRY WAS DISSOLVED THREE YEARS AGO, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT NEEDED TWO MORE MONTHS TO COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION OF REFORMS NOW UNDERWAY. AKHTAR OBJECTED TO OPPOSITION ATTEMPTS TO DISCUSS "POLITICAL ISSUES" IN BALUCHISTAN, BUT PM INTERVENED TO CAUSTICALLY NOTE THAT ALTHOUGH THE HOUSE MAY NOT BE COMPETENT UNDER ITS RULES TO DEBATE POLITICAL ISSUES WHEN A MOTION TO EXTEND PRESIDENT'S RULE IS BEING DISCUSSED, "I THINK INCOMPETENT MEN SHOULD BE FREE TO DEBATE IT." AFTER THIS CONTENTIOUS OPENING, DEBATE BECAME HIGHLY ACERBIC WITH GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION FORCES EXCHANGING CHARGES.

3. ALL OPPOSITION MEMBERS WHO SPOKE CALLED FOR A "POLITICAL SOLUTION" TO THE BALUCHISTAN PROBLEM WHICH MEANT WITHDRAWAL OF ARMY, RELEASE OF THE JAILED NAP LEADERS AND OPEN AND FREE ELECTIONS FOR A NEW PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY. IN HIS ADDRESS, BHUTTO'S CONSTANT THEME WAS THAT SITUATION IN BALUCHISTAN WAS GOOD FOR THE PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN BUT CRITICAL AND PAINFUL FOR THE OPPOSITION. ALTHOUGH HE HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT POLITICAL ISSUES SHOULD BE RESOLVED THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS, THE OPPOSITION HAD SYMPATHIZED WITH UNCONSTITUTIONAL APPROACHES AND THE PRESENT OPPOSITION LEADERS HAD COLLABORATED WITH THE NAP. HE WAS EXTREMELY CRITICAL OF THE REMAINING OPPOSITION IN THE PARLIAMENT, IN ADDITION TO THE FORMER NAP GOVERNMENT IN BALUCHISTAN. HE CONTENDED THE NAP MINISTRY'S OBJECT WAS "CHAOS AND TURMOIL" IN ORDER TO FULFILL THE "SECOND PHASE OF THE LONDON PLAN." (FIRST PHASE BEING THE SEPARATION OF EAST PAKISTAN.)

4. BHUTTO DEFENDED HIS DECISIONS TO ACCEPT SARDARS IN PPP AND RETENTION OF FORMER CABINET MINISTERS AS ADVISORS TO THE GOVERNOR IN BALUCHISTAN. HE NOTED IT WAS A QUESTION OF WHAT TACTICS WERE EMPLOYED TO ACHIEVE THE AL# OF PROGRESS FOR THE PEOPLE OF BALUCHISTAN.
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BHUTTO THEN GAVE LONG CHRONOLOGY OF HIS ATTEMPTS TO NEGOTIATE WITH NAP LEADERS WHICH HE SAID WERE CHARACTERIZED BY THEIR ADOPTING AN "EVASIVE ATTITUDE." HE ADDED THAT DURING ONE MEETING WITH NAP LEADERS HE TOLD AKBAR BUGTI -FORMER NAP GOVERNOR OF BALUCHISTAN - THE NAP HAD MADE FOUR MISTAKES IN BALUCHISTAN. THEY HAD OVERESTIMATED THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT'S CAPABILITIES AND POWER TO HARM PAKISTAN; THEY HAD OVERESTIMATED THE

SUPPORT OF ANOTHER "POWER;" THEY HAD RELIED ON ADVICE OF CHARLATANS AND OPPORTUNISTS, AND FINALLY BUGTI WAS ONLY INTERESTED IN REMAINING GOVERNOR. HE SAID HE HAD WANTED THE NEGOTIATIONS TO SUCCEED AND ALTHOUGH THEY DID NOT, "MY CONSCIENCE IS CLEAR AND NOT A SINGLE DROP OF BLOOD OF INNOCENT PEOPLE IS TAINTED ON MY HAND."

5. AFTER HIS BARRAGE OF CRITICISM DIRECTED AT THE OPPOSITION AND HIS CLAIMS IT HAS SUPPORTED THE NAP IN ITS TREASONOUS ACTIVITIES, HE CLOSED BY HOLDING OUT A TATTERED OLIVE BRANCH BY AGAIN REAFFIRMING IT WAS NEVER TOO LATE TO HOLD NEGOTIATIONS. HOWEVER, IF THINGS WENT TOO FAR, THEN "THEY WENT BEYOND THE CONTROL OF ONE MAN."
BYROADE

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED.

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